

I Claim:

1. A communications device with a sound masking system comprising:

5 a communications device having an audio input device adapted to capture a voice sound of a user;

a voice masking signal generator in communication with the audio input device and adapted to generate a masking signal capable of interfering with the ability of others in the area of the communications device to readily discern the voice sound of the user, the masking signal being at least partially derived from the voice sounds; and

10 at least one speaker in communication with the masking signal generator, the at least one speaker adapted to emit the masking signal.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the audio input device comprises a telephone microphone.

3. The system of claim 2, wherein the telephone is a wireless telephone.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the audio input device comprises a hands-free headset.

20 5. The system of claim 1, wherein the masking signal comprises re-mixed portions of the inputted voice sounds.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein the masking signal comprises time-delayed portions of the inputted voice sounds.

25 7. The system of claim 1, wherein the masking signal comprises portions of the inputted voice sounds mixed with other sounds.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one speaker is located in an office environment.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one speaker is in communication with the masking signal generator via a wireless connection.

10. A communications device with a voice masking system for use in a work environment, comprising:

a communications device with an audio input device adapted to receive and transmit a voice sound of a user;

a voice masking system capable of generating and emitting an audible voice masking signal based on a user's voice as detected by the audio input device of the communications device, the voice masking signal adapted to prevent others in the area of the user from readily discerning the voice sounds of the user; and

at least one speaker for emitting the voice making signal.

11. The communications device with a voice masking system of claim 10, wherein the workspace comprises an open office environment.

12. The work environment of claim 10, wherein the communications device is a telephone.

13. The work environment of claim 10, wherein the communications device is a radio.

14. The work environment of claim 13, wherein the voice masking signal is generated by re-mixing portions of the voice sounds of the user.

15. The work environment of claim 12, wherein the speaker is connected to the telephone as a one piece element.

5 16. A method for masking the voice of a user, the method comprising: capturing a voice sound of a user with an audio input device; generating a masking signal derived at least in part from the captured voice sounds, the masking signal capable of interfering with the ability of other users of the work environment to readily discern the voice sounds; and emitting the masking signal into at least a portion of an area of the user.

 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the voice sounds are captured while the user is speaking on a telephone.

10 18. The method of claim 17, wherein the masking signal is generated by re-mixing portions of the voice sounds.

 19. The method of claim 18, wherein the masking signal is generated by time-delaying portions of the voice sounds.

15 20. The method of claim 19, wherein the masking signal is generated by mixing portions of the voice sounds with other sounds.

 21. The method of claim 20, wherein the masking signal is generated in substantially real-time.